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ALCOHOL AND CRIME: A STUDY IN SOCIAL CAUSATION

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At last, after generations of dispute, experiment, and research, clarified public opinion recognizes the liquor traffic as a problem of first-rate national importance whose solution depends upon prevention rather than cure. Alcohol appears as a factor, a chief maker, of the bad social conditions which mar our civilization. It is known to be a direct or contributory cause of degeneracy, pauperism, poverty, disease, and crime. In short, science has cleared the way for an intelligent approach to the drink problem. Refuge after refuge of the liquor interest has been destroyed. Pet fallacies have been exposed. Science has demonstrated that alcohol is not a healthful "food," a safe "stimulant," nor a socially productive "employer of labor." It increases the chances of death. If beer is "liquid bread," we now know that it is not the bread of life but of death, precisely in proportion to the amount of alcohol which it contains. In small quantity as well as in large, alcohol lessens physical and mental efficiency. It is a toxin, a narcotic, not a stimulant. It hinders sane thinking; for while it increases boldness and self-confidence it impairs the judgment. In all its effects it is destructive of the human organism.

I. NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Accordingly, in its use and traffic alcohol appears as a powerful antisocial force. Especially is it a social menace with respect to crime. The results of the most cautious research show that it is a producer of criminals and of crime on an enormous scale. What else could one expect? Has not the scientific laboratory proved that the habitual use of alcohol, in whatever quantity, disintegrates the moral character? It impairs the judgment, clouds the reason, and enfeebles the will; while at the same time it arouses the appetites, inflames the passions, releases the primitive beast from the

artificial restraint of social discipline. All the conditions are favorable to the generation of crime.

To state in percentages the exact relation of alcohol to crime, or to the various classes of crime, may not always be possible in the present stage of statistical research. In the last analysis it may not always be easy to determine whether the crime committed by the intoxicated man is due to the habitual use of alcohol; whether the drinking habit was induced by poverty, disease, or other misery; or whether there is a "vicious circle" of cause and effect. It may not in every case be possible to disentangle alcohol as a cause from the skein of contributory causes of crime, nor to be quite sure whether it is a direct or an indirect cause; but, as will presently appear, the amount of crime for which it is certain that alcohol is wholly or in part responsible is so vast that even on this ground alone the shocked social conscience should demand nothing less than a drastic remedy: absolute outlawry of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks.

The problem in hand is complex; but here, too, science has done much to simplify the task of the investigator. Just as the physicist, the chemist, the biologist, and the pathologist have revealed the true nature of alcohol, so the criminologist, with his scientific coadjutors, is disclosing the real causes of crimes and the true nature of criminals. Tendencies or "characters" may be transmissible from parent to child. Heredity in this sense is a factor in human destiny which the eugenicist is reckoning with to the advantage of the race. But, practically speaking, we now know that the criminal is the creature of environment, of wrong social conditions which may be remedied. The extreme dogma of Lombroso and his school that the criminal as such is an abnormal man, a distinct human type, is swiftly passing, if it be not entirely abandoned. Even Lombroso modified his view as presented in the *Criminal Man* (1895); and in his later work, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies* (1899), he places the accent on social causes.¹ There

¹ The development of the theories as to the causes of crime are traced by Maurice Parmelee in the introduction of this English translation of Lombroso's work; and also in his *Principles of Anthropology and Sociology in Their Relations to Criminal Procedure* (1908).

is no hereditary criminal class. If the "born criminal" exists he is a rare specimen, indeed, compared with the sinister yet pathetic host begotten by bad social conditions.

Decisive proof of the power of living conditions to save or to damn the human soul is presented in Dugdale's famous book. Professor Giddings writes:

An impression quite generally prevails that "The Jukes" is a thorough-going demonstration of "hereditary criminality," "hereditary pauperism," "hereditary degeneracy," and so on. It is nothing of the kind, and its author never made such claim for it. He undoubtedly believed in the hereditary transmission of character tendencies, as of physical traits, and here and there he points out what seem to him to be evidences of heredity, in this sense, in the "Jukes" blood. But he is ever careful . . . to warn the reader "that the conclusion is tentative. Far from believing that heredity is fatal, Mr. Dugdale was profoundly convinced that 'environment' can be relied on to modify, and ultimately to eradicate, even such deep-rooted and widespread growths of vice and crime as the 'Jukes' group exemplifies." In the clearer light afforded by Weismann's researches and the Mendelian law, "we can only say that *probably* heredity is a fateful factor in the moral, and therefore in the social, realm, but that we need an immense amount of patient research to determine exactly what it is and what it does." One thing is certain, heredity "always has the coefficient 'environment'"; for hereditary character tendencies, whether these be good or evil, are modified, held in abeyance, or pushed forward by the conditions of the individual's life.¹

These conclusions are powerfully supported by the great work of Bonger, *Criminality and Economic Conditions*.

The result is enlightening for the relation of alcohol to crime. There is no longer a plausible excuse for *laissez faire*. Under the shield of heredity the social conscience may no longer shift its burden to the shoulders of the Almighty. If directly or indirectly criminality is mainly the fruit of bad social conditions, the remedy is in society's own hands; for intellectual man, unlike the lower animal, is able to transform his environment. Sometimes the task is titanic. To master the crime-producing environment which consists in alcohol and the organized alcohol traffic may cost more courage, wisdom, and toil than it cost to abolish human slavery, than it may cost to destroy the "great white plague" or the "great

¹ Franklin H. Giddings, Introduction to the *Jukes*. "Criminals are made and not born," H. H. Goddard, *The Kallikak Family*, p. 54.

black plague"; but it can be done and it *will* be done when its nature is clearly understood by the majority. To believe otherwise would be to lose faith in human intelligence.

As a preparation for a wise policy the sinister record of actual crimes caused by alcohol must be placed within the reach of all. It should become a part of the textbook of public education. That record must be completed by the trained statistician. Already several valuable studies of limited extent—the best by the Committee of Fifty—have provided materials for fairly safe conclusions. Is it not needful to extend the investigation and bring it to date? Should not the national government put the whole many-sided problem of alcohol and the liquor traffic in the hands of a properly equipped commission for basic and comprehensive research? Still the figures in hand have a very great meaning. They reveal alcohol as a chief factor in felonies, in lesser crimes and misdemeanors, and in the often more harmful "social crimes" which are not always noticed by the statute book. What are the facts for each of these three classes of offenses?

ALCOHOL THE MOTHER OF FELONY

The investigation of the Committee of Fifty (1893-1905) enables us in part to measure for the United States the relative influence of alcohol as a producer of felony and equivalent heinous crime. It is important to note, in weighing its conclusions, that the committee was almost painfully cautious and conservative in its methods and in its findings. It did not attempt the enormous task of gathering the facts for the whole country. Its aim was to establish conclusions which should have typical value. Accordingly, its study "covered 13,402 convicts, in seventeen prisons and reformatories scattered throughout twelve states." In effect it was thus virtually restricted to the crimes usually classified as "felonies." The results of the investigation are presented by Mr. Koren¹ in a number of elaborate statistical tables or "summaries": rich mines for exploitation by the criminologist, the economist, and the sociologist. What is their meaning for the problem in hand?

¹ John Koren, *Economic Aspects of the Liquor Problem*, pp. 133-209, and tables in the Appendix.

The most salient fact—huge, tragic, portentous—is that 6,694 of these crimes, one-half of the whole number investigated, were wholly or in part induced by intemperance as a “general” cause. In 4,179 cases, or 31.18 per cent of the total, alcohol was the “first” or principal cause; and in 2,261 cases, or 16.87 per cent of the whole, it was the sole cause of the felony. Assuming that the same ratio obtains, this means, according to the United States census, that on June 30, 1904, there were in the penitentiaries and reformatories of the whole country 30,000 felons whose crimes were wholly or in part due to alcohol.¹

Another fact, hardly less enlightening, is disclosed by observing the nativity of the convicts. Intemperance as a cause of crime “yields percentages for the nationalities in the following order”: (1) Scotch, 58.33; (2) Canadian, 56.74; (3) Irish, 56.70; (4) Swedish and Norwegian, 56.25; (5) Polish, 53.41; (6) English, 52.92; (7) American, 50.23; (8) Italian, 50.00; (9) German, 44.87; (10) Austrian, 34.62; (11) Russian, 25.00.

The lesson taught by these figures is not hard to read. Among the foreign-born residents of the United States the relative percentage of felonies due to intemperance for each nationality stands in direct ratio to the drinking habits of such nationality. *The hardest drinking peoples show the highest relative percentages of heinous crimes induced by alcohol.* The relative quantity of alcoholic liquor consumed by a people produces a corresponding relative percentage of *its convicted felons*. Hence, as shown above, the notoriously hard-drinking Scotch, Irish, Scandinavians, and English take high rank for the proportion of their alcoholic criminals; while at the very bottom of the list we find the convicts classed as “Russians,” in reality of the “Hebrew race which is noted for its exceptional sobriety the world over.” The seeming exceptions to this rule may be explained. Thus the surprisingly high rank of the Poles and Italians may be accounted for by emotional race characteristics causing a large percentage of “crime against the person.” Perhaps the lower rank of the Germans may be accounted for by the excellent urban, industrial, and other superior social environment

¹ The total number of felons for all causes in prisons was *on that day* 60,653; but *during the year* 149,691 had been committed to imprisonment.

which partially counteracts the influence of an excessive use of alcoholic drinks. For, it should be noted, the statistics do not show that the total amount of crime committed by a people bears a direct relation to the quantity of alcohol consumed; but that, of the crimes for which a nationality is actually responsible, the percentage due to intemperance, generally speaking, bears the quantitative relation already set forth. In the cautious words of Mr. Koren, "more convicts of a hard-drinking people will owe their criminal condition to drink than those of a notably temperate nationality." The percentages for the hard-drinking peoples, when alcohol is considered either as the principal or as the sole cause of crime, tend to sustain this view.

Decidedly among the master makers of criminals in the United States alcohol holds the highest rank.¹ It is the primary breeder of felony. Mr. Koren's tables enable us to see how intemperance measures up with its chief rivals in the wasting of human life. "Lack of industrial training," "unfavorable environment," and "intemperance" are compared, each as the "first" or principal cause of crime. Intemperance is excluded from all cases in which it was only a minor factor, so that here its full extent as a crime cause is not under discussion. Grouping the 13,402 cases under review in this way, unfavorable environment is chargeable with 4,091, or 30.53 per cent; lack of industrial training with 2,943, or 21.96 per cent; intemperance with 4,179, or 31.18 per cent; other causes with 2,189, or 16.33 per cent.

Again, when the same factors are compared, each as the "sole" cause of crime, alcohol maintains its supremacy. Distributing the 13,402 cases according to sole causes, unfavorable environment is responsible for 986, or 7.36 per cent; lack of industrial training for 959, or 7.16 per cent; intemperance for 2,261, or 16.87 per cent. So, if the three great competitors in the production of criminals work independently, single-handed, alcohol proves stronger than its two rivals combined. The relation is more than reversed, however, when the victims of unfavorable environment and lack of industrial training, working separately and also in combination, are

¹ According to Bonger, *Criminality and Economic Conditions*, pp. 508-16, chronic alcoholism predisposes a man to crime even when he is not drunk.

added; for then they amount to 4,519, almost exactly twice as many as the victims of intemperance working alone.

The mine is by no means yet exhausted. According to these tables, what is the *favorite* kind of crime which alcohol produces? For the three rivals, each acting as the "first" or principal cause, the respective percentages of "crimes against property" are these: unfavorable environment, 30.54; lack of industrial training, 25.40; intemperance, 29.58. The percentages for "crimes against the person" show a very different relative rank. Now unfavorable environment yields 30.43; lack of industrial training, 13.45; intemperance, 36.14. The superior rank of alcohol as a producer of this class of felonies is revealed in an even more striking way, if intemperance be measured as a general rather than as a principal cause. While for all causes only 23.17 per cent of these convicts were committed for crimes against the person, 51.53 per cent of those who owed their punishment to intemperance were guilty of that kind of crime.

Of course it is not surprising that alcohol, while not neglecting the destruction of property, should show a decided preference for homicide and other crimes of violence against human beings.¹ This tendency is sometimes accentuated by race temperament. Already it has been suggested that the high relative percentage of alcoholic crimes committed by Poles and Italians may be explained by this tendency. It becomes a serious social menace in case of the Indian and the Negro. The effects of alcohol on the passions of the red man are disastrous in the extreme. The intoxicated Indian is bestial, almost fiendish, in his depravity. No depth of immorality, we are told, is too low for him. The lust of killing is aroused by the "fire water." Yet the specific desire for intoxicating drink is not an inherent race appetite. It was kindled and fostered by the insatiable greed of the white rum-seller. It is hardly too much to say that, first and last during nearly three centuries, the misfortunes, the degradation, the crimes, and the threatened extinction of the Indian people are due chiefly to the liquor traffic.

The case of the negro is unique. He is not a habitual drunkard. As a rule the negro of the South does not use liquor in his

¹ Compare Bonger, *op. cit.*, pp. 639-44.

home. He indulges in orgies of intoxication on Saturdays, on Christmas, or other holidays. Then his evil passions are released and he is prone to commit acts of violence; but in a less degree than the white man is his efficiency or earning capacity impaired by these excesses. Nevertheless, reports Mr. Koren, "whether we regard intemperance as a principal or as a general cause, it is seen to affect more vitally the criminal condition of the negroes than that of the whites. In the first instance we get a lower percentage by about 2 per cent, and in the second by about 10 per cent, in favor of the whites. In other words, while the statistics of poverty as well as of pauperism disclose far less intemperance in the colored race, among criminals the conditions are reversed. How are these apparent contradictions to be reconciled?" From a study of the schedules, he continues, we learn that "proportionately a great many more colored than white men are imprisoned for crimes against the person committed while under the influence of liquor. That is, they were to an unusual number guilty of unpremeditated stabbings, shootings, and other violent acts resulting from drunken quarrels that are so common among certain classes of negroes." In harmony with this conclusion is the fact that relatively fewer crimes against property, by 1 per cent, are committed by negroes than by whites; and that, while unfavorable environment and lack of industrial training combined as crime producers hold second rank among the white convicts, they hold only fourth rank among the black.

Is it strange that the South has become leader in the warfare against the alcohol traffic?

3. ALCOHOL THE BREEDER OF CRIME AND OF CRIME-PRODUCING CONDITIONS

The careful investigation by the Committee of Fifty, covering perhaps one-fifth of the convicts in the United States then imprisoned for heinous offenses, thus constitutes a powerful indictment of the liquor traffic. It is highly probable that its findings, startling though they are, do not disclose the full extent of the evil even in this restricted field. At the very best, statistical averages express but feebly and coldly the miseries and wrongs due to an antisocial

agency such as alcohol. Investigations of the relation of intemperance to crime in general bring us nearer the truth. For example, Ferri has pointed out a significant parallel between the increase in the consumption of alcoholic liquors and the increase of crime in France.¹ In that country the "average consumption of wine, estimated at 62 litres (13.64 gallons) per head in 1829, exceeded 100 litres in 1879; and in Paris the average of 120 litres in 1819-30, reached 227 litres in 1881." Again, the "total manufacture of alcohol in France (95 per cent of which is consumed in the form of drink) rose from 479,680 hectolitres in 1843 to 1,309,565 in 1879, and 2,004,000 in 1887." Simultaneously "there was an increase of crimes and offences, suicides in particular having increased from 1,542 in 1829 to 8,202 in 1887." Furthermore, he shows that the number of crimes rises and falls with good and bad vintages, respectively. Failure of the vintage in the years 1853-55, 1859, 1867, 1873, 1878-80 was "attended by a remarkable diminution of crime (assaults and wounding)"; while there was an increase of crime in 1850, 1856-58, 1862-63, 1865, 1868, 1874-75, when the vintage was abundant.

Thus a popular fallacy is exposed. This "parallelism," remarks Lombroso on Ferri's figures,² "is the stranger and more noteworthy because several authors pretend to attribute a fatal influence to spirits only and not to wine," so that it is "proposed to encourage the distribution of wine in the countries most inclined to crime." Yet these statistics show that on the whole the relation of the consumption of spirits to "homicides and assaults is not so evident as that of wine"; and "this is easy to understand, for brawls are more easily started in the wineshops than in the establishments of the brandy sellers, where the stay is too short for an opportunity to be given for quarrels." In Germany, as we shall see presently, it is beer rather than wine or spirits that measures the growth of crimes of violence.

The facts just considered have a special interest in connection with the quantitative theory of the relation of alcohol to crime presented above in connection with the nationality of convicts.

¹ Ferri, *Criminal Sociology*, pp. 116-24.

² Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, p. 91.

It finds further support in the parallelism between the increased number of crimes and the larger use of alcoholic drinks on holidays. Schröter "reports that in Germany out of 2,178 crimes (assault and battery) 58 per cent took place Saturday night, 3 per cent Sunday, 1 per cent Monday; and that upon these same days sexual crimes, rebellion, and arson took the lead with a ratio of 87 per cent."¹ In this instance it is significant that of the 215 cases of crime taking place on Monday 112, or 53 per cent, were "committed by men who did not go to work on that day." But Sunday is the favored time for such offenses. A mass of statistics gathered by Aschaffenburg² from various sources reflects "sadly on what is called Sunday rest." It is noteworthy that a large percentage of the assaults and other crimes committed by German students are holiday offenses. For this fact beer-drinking is mainly responsible. "Compared with the criminality of all classes of society, that of the students appears very grave, especially taking into consideration how few of their crimes are offences against property, which constitute 46 per cent of all crimes and offences against the laws of the land."³

A similar coincidence in the number of crimes of violence and the consumption of alcoholic drinks on holidays has been noted in Italy, where "all the crimes of violence and against persons take the lead on holidays, as compared with fraudulent and premeditated crimes," which are not primarily induced by drink.⁴ It is needless to add that every observer knows that the same parallelism exists in America wherever the saloon is open on holidays or on days of great popular gatherings. For a vast number of families, days of "rejoicing" are in fact days of sorrow and misery.⁵

In European countries as well as in America alcohol shows a decided preference for crimes of violence against the person. Of 3,000 French convicts investigated by Marambat, 78 per cent were drunkards. Of the crimes against the person committed by them

¹ Schröter, *Jahrbuch der Westphälischen Gefangnisse*; cf. Lombroso, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

² See the tables and diagrams in Aschaffenburg, *Crime and Its Repression*, pp. 76-80, digesting the researches of Lang, Koblinski, Löffler, Kürz, Heim, Schröter, and others.

³ Aschaffenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81, Table XVIII.

⁴ Lombroso, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

⁵ Compare Bonger, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

88 per cent were induced by alcohol; while the percentage of their crimes against property due to the same cause was but 77. Quite similar results were obtained for Italy through Marro's researches.¹ The fullest and most carefully digested statistics have been gathered for Germany. Baer gives figures for the penitentiaries showing that 75.5 per cent of assaults; 68.8 per cent of robberies and murders; 63.2 per cent of simple homicides; and 60.2 per cent of sexual crimes are caused by alcohol; while in the common jails the percentages for alcoholic crimes of violence are even higher.²

Statistics for the period 1883-1902 confirm Baer's earlier conclusions. In the entire empire the average number of crimes committed for every 100,000 civilians of punishable age was as follows for five classes of offenses: (1) resisting officers, etc., 41; (2) felonious assault and battery, 1.58; (3) theft, 201; (4) fraud, 47; (5) aggravated assault and battery, 196. It is enlightening to observe that for the first and fifth of these classes, where we should expect drunkenness to be a cause, the averages are high. Furthermore, in several districts on the same basis of 100,000, the number of convictions for aggravated assault and battery is startlingly large. For instance, in Bromberg it is 358; in Southeastern (Lower) Bavaria, 441; in the Palatinate, 517. Thus these offenses "are concentrated at three points." The reason is not hard to find. "The three centers of this brutal crime are also the three centers of alcoholic indulgence in its various forms: in the east (Bromberg), spirits; in Bavaria, beer; and in the Palatinate, wine."³

Here an interesting question arises: which of the three rival kinds of alcoholic drink is the most efficient maker of criminals? In the comparison just made wine takes precedence; but for Germany as a whole, and probably also for America, the leadership seems to belong to beer. The researches of Wlassak⁴ indicate that in the descending scale the sequence is "beer, wine, spirits." In

¹ Lombroso, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-99; Marambat, in *Revue scientifique* (1888).

² Baer, *Der Alkoholismus* (Berlin, 1878).

³ Aschaffenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44.

⁴ Wlassak, *Der Alkoholismus im Gebiete von Mährisch-Ostrau*; Aschaffenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

any case, "we can certainly agree with Földes¹ in thinking that the kind of beverage is unimportant, as compared with efficacy of the alcohol it contains."² If this conclusion is just, it warns us against making what may prove to be a fatal mistake: the amount of crime and most likely of the other evils due to alcohol will not be lessened by substituting beer for spirits or even for wine. *It may even be increased*; for the tendency is to consume it in relatively larger quantities, partly under the illusion of its alleged less dangerous effects. It is the quantity of alcohol which counts.

For crimes of violence English statistics tell a tragic tale. Measured by districts, the number of assaults and homicides rises steadily as the amount of drunkenness increases in passing from region to region. According to expert medical research (1907), at least 60 per cent of the graver homicidal offenses and about 82 per cent of the minor crimes of violence are chiefly due to alcohol. It is responsible for half the crimes of lust. The violation of children occurs most often in "seaports where alcoholism is most rife"; while rape on adults, like very many other crimes, is frequently the result, not of chronic, but of simple drunkenness.³ "In England, where it makes itself felt with most intensity," remarks Lombroso, "alcoholism enters as a cause into no more than 77 per cent of the cases" of crime.⁴

The European figures just presented must be taken for what they are worth. They are approximations to the truth won by expert investigations of limited extent. They probably fall short of measuring the whole volume of criminality due to intemperance. Vast as is the number of felonies and other heinous offenses caused by

¹ Földes, "Einige Ergebnisse der neueren Kriminalstatistik," *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Strafrechtswissenschaft*, XI, 535; cf. Aschaffenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

² Consult Aschaffenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46, and Elizabeth Tilton's enlightening discussion, "Is Beer the Cure for the Drink Evil?" *Survey*, XXVII, 599-604, February 24, 1917, showing that beer is an efficient producer of both disease and crime. "No other drink is so insidious," affirms Professor Gustav von Bunge; and these conclusions are sustained by the researches of Professor Emil Kräpelin and other German experts.

³ William C. Sullivan, "The Criminology of Alcoholism," in T. N. Kelynack's *The Drink Problem*, pp. 189-98.

⁴ Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, pp. 98-99.

alcohol, the number of lesser crimes is much larger. In certain groups of prisoners the percentage of alcoholic convicts mounts as high as 96 or even 100.¹ Very convincing are the facts disclosed by the careful and elaborate report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor for the year closing August 20, 1895.² Only the general results of the investigation may here be mentioned. For one year in one state, for all classes of crime, including drunkenness, 26,672 persons were convicted. Of these, 21,863 were under the influence of liquor at the time the crime was committed. Again, when the intent to commit the crime was formed, 4,206 are reported as "in liquor"; 4,866 as "sober"; and the rest, 17,600, as "not ascertained." To the question, "Did the intemperate habits of the criminal lead to a condition which induced the crime?" 22,514 answered "yes"; while in 16,115 cases that "condition" was in part induced by the "intemperate habits of others." Here, as in Germany, beer is the "ranking" drink as a producer of law-breakers. On the average each convict was "addicted" to 2.97 "kinds of liquor"; but while 8,891 reported as addicted to wine; 20,251 to distilled liquor; and 22,233 to malted liquor, the highest number of all, 23,355 convicts, confessed that they were addicted to lager beer.

Furthermore, these tables reveal another fact which should quicken the social conscience: *the largest percentage of alcoholic criminals is yielded by the "occasional drinkers" (18,571); the next largest, by the "social drinkers" (18,392); while at the bottom of the list are the habitual or "excessive drinkers" (4,516).* Baer obtains a similar result for Prussia: 52.2 per cent of the alcoholic convicts in the penitentiaries and 70.4 per cent of those in the prisons are reported by him as "occasional" drinkers.³ *Decidedly the social or occasional drunkard is a serious menace to society.* The constant drunkard may not be quite so capable of the homicidal rage as is the fitful drunkard; but, like the constant opium smoker,

¹ Lilian Brandt, "Alcoholism and Social Problems," *Survey*, XXV, 19.

² Part I: "Relation of the Liquor Traffic to Pauperism, Crime, and Insanity," *Report*, pp. 3-416. Its relation to crime is treated in many tables (pp. 121-287).

³ Aschaffenburg (*Crime and Its Repression*, pp. 72-75) discusses this point, reproducing Baer's figures; cf. Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, pp. 96-98.

he has paid the price. His relative immunity—it is only *relative* immunity—spells degeneration. He is but a survivor of a throng of whom many, before becoming sodden, have passed through the criminal court.

4. ALCOHOL AND SOCIAL CRIMES

The whole story has not yet been told. There are even darker phases of alcoholic criminality. Some of the most fatal wrongs against society are not measured by court sentences nor defined by the criminal codes. There are long-range offenses which elude the lawmaker and escape the notice of the man on the street. Alcohol is responsible for such "social crimes" on an enormous scale. In various ways, for instance, it is a menace to the family and a destroyer of domestic happiness. Thus, during the official year ending April 3, 1913, the court of domestic relations in Chicago heard and disposed of 3,699 cases, of which 2,432 were for wife or child abandonment or for failure of parents to support their children. Among the causes of these 2,432 family separations, excessive use of intoxicating liquors held first place with 46 per cent, while but 12 per cent are charged to the next highest cause, immorality of the husband.¹

The legal as well as the actual disruption of the family life is likewise very often due to intemperance. In Germany drunkenness is one of the chief causes of separation and divorce; and the children of divorced parents are frequently forced into a life of crime.² In the United States drunkenness is the officially assigned cause of about one-fifth of all the dissolutions of wedlock. The great government report, covering the years 1887-1906, discloses the sinister fact that directly or indirectly 184,568 divorces, or nearly 20 per cent of the whole number reported for the two decades, were granted for intemperance; and in nine-tenths of these cases the culprit was the man.³ Think of it! More than one hundred and eighty

¹ *Sixth Report of the Municipal Court of Chicago*, pp. 84-86; cf. also Herbert C. Shattuck, "Legal Aspects of Prohibition," *Case and Comment*, XX, 463.

² Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, p. 90.

³ Bureau of the Census, Special Report, *Marriage and Divorce*, I, 28-29; also *Bulletin*, No. 96, pp. 14-15.

thousand marriages dissolved and homes destroyed by the drink curse, not to mention the thousands of wives who patiently endure that curse without seeking judicial relief! Even this huge number fails to tell the whole tale of family wreckage due to alcohol. It is well understood that a large percentage of the divorces in the court records charged to desertion, and some of those charged to adultery, are really due to conditions caused by drink. Does not the situation call loudly for an abatement of the divorce evil through the outlawry of a primary cause, the liquor traffic?

Alcohol in many ways is a menace to mother-welfare and child-life. It is a protoplasmic poison which from the instant of conception may foredoom a human being to an abnormal life of misery and crime. "The child of the female drunkard is not born with a direct alcoholic tendency, but is probably born with ill-nourished tissues, and especially with a badly developed brain and nervous system, which render him more liable than a healthy individual to fall under the influence of drink." The milk of the drinking mother contains alcohol, so that the "child then absolutely receives alcohol as part of his diet, with the worst effects upon his organs"; for alcohol harms the "cells in proportion to their immaturity."¹ The harmful influence of the inebriate mother on the unborn child is established beyond reasonable doubt. "Since the work of Nicloux it may be considered to be proved that alcohol may pass as such from the mother to the foetus, and in considerable quantities."² In a study of chronic drunkards among the mothers in the Liverpool prisons, Dr. W. C. Sullivan has shown that a large percentage of their offspring are degenerates.³ He "found that of 120 such inebriate women there were born 600 children, of whom 335 (or 55.8 per cent) died under two years of age or were dead-born." The result of a comparison of "these figures with similar returns from sober branches of the same families" is even more convincing. Of

¹ Mary Scharlieb, "Alcoholism in Relation to Women and Children," in Kely-nack, *The Drink Problem*, pp. 162, 166; cf. Horsley and Sturge, *Alcohol and the Human Body*, pp. 263-65.

² Nicloux, *L'Obstetrique* (1900), cited by Newman, *Infant Mortality*, p. 72; cf. Horsley and Sturge, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-65.

³ Sullivan, "Influence of Maternal Inebriety on the Offspring," *Journal of Mental Science*, XLV (1899), 489-503.

the 125 children of 21 drunken mothers 69, or 55.2 per cent, died under two years of age; whereas of the 138 children of 28 sober mothers only 33, or 23.9 per cent, died in those years.¹

Further, Dr. Sullivan found a "progressive death-rate in the alcoholic family." With the advancing years the inebriate mother gains more and more power to doom her child. Dr. Sullivan's results are exhibited in the following table:²

	Cases	Dead and Dead-born	Dead and Dead-born Percentage	Dead-born Percentage
First born.....	80	27	33.7	6.2
Second born.....	80	40	50.0	11.2
Third born.....	80	42	52.6	7.6
Fourth and fifth born.....	111	73	65.7	10.8
Sixth to tenth born.....	93	67	72.0	17.2

Commenting on these figures Dr. Sullivan says "it is especially noteworthy that the rate of still-births shows almost as marked a tendency to regular increase as does the death-rate among children born alive." Dr. Laitinen discovered a similar waste of life in Finland. He inquired into the death-rate in "3,611 families which had 17,394 children. Where the parents were abstainers only 13 per cent of their children had died. The parents who were 'moderate' drinkers lost 23 per cent; and the heavy drinkers lost 32 per cent."³

Even more startling evidence as to the disastrous effects of parental inebriety has recently been given by Dr. Mathew Woods.⁴

¹ Newman, *Infant Mortality*, pp. 72-73; also Kelynack, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-63.

² Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 493. The table is reprinted by Newman, *Infant Mortality*, p. 73. For similar evidence see *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration* (London, 1904), III, 67-68 *passim*; Aschaffenburg, *Crime and Its Repression*, pp. 69-72, 124; Demme, *Ueber den Einfluss des Alkohols auf den Organismus des Kindes* (1891); Legrain, *Degenerescence et alcoolisme* (1895); Shattuck, in *Case and Comment*, XX, 465-66.

³ Scientific Temperance Federation, *The Effects of Alcoholic Drinks upon the Human Mind and Body* (1913), p. 24. On Dr. Laitinen's research, see Horsley and Sturge, *op. cit.*, pp. 248-49; cf. Bonger, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

⁴ Woods, "Seven Cases of Epilepsy in Children Traced to Single Alcoholic Intoxications on the Part of One or Both Parents Otherwise Teetotalers," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, LXI (December 27, 1913), 2291-92, supplementing his article in *ibid.*, February 9, 1907, p. 469.

Experts are mostly agreed, he points out, that of the two rivals—the “twin brothers”—in causing congenital epilepsy, ancestral drunkenness and ancestral epilepsy, the former is the more prolific in the breeding of epileptic offspring. Chronic inebriety probably accounts for 35 per cent of all cases of this disease. Maudsley boldly asserts that “epileptics, because of drink on the part of parents, are as much manufactured articles as are steam engines and calico-printing machines.” Hitherto, in about 30 per cent of the cases of epilepsy in children, no adequate cause could be found; for the parents were sound and had a family history of good health and sanity. Possibly Dr. Woods has solved the puzzle. He has established a strong probability that in each of the seven cases studied by him epilepsy took place in children whose genesis occurred during the intoxication of one or both of the parents who usually were abstainers from alcoholic drinks. Here is food for sober thought. Is epilepsy the only disease which may be caused by the single inebriation of the parent? If the occasional as well as the habitual drunkard may foredoom his unborn child to such a fate, is any policy adequate short of total abstention from intoxicating drinks and absolute outlawry of the liquor traffic?

Abortions are frequent “among women who drink; and for this reason families of drinkers show a fecundity from two to four times less than that of temperate families. This fatal liquor can, then, stimulate carnal passion to the point of violence and crime without thereby increasing the birth-rate.”¹ Drunkenness of the parents destroys child-life after birth as well as before. Owing to neglect and malnutrition the infant death-rate in alcoholic families is excessive; and the slaughter of babes is very often by violence and especially through overlaying.

The evidence for the injurious effect of alcohol on parentage is very strong; and the negative results obtained through the investigations of the eugenics laboratory in London are not sufficient to refute it. On the contrary, when properly interpreted in the light

¹ Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, p. 88. On abortions due to alcohol see Newman, *Infant Mortality*, p. 74, and T. C. Shaw, “Psychology of the Inebriate Mother,” *British Journal of Inebriety*, October, 1903.

of biological law, they seem either to confirm it or not to affect it all.¹

Directly or indirectly alcohol is probably the most potent factor in the waste of human life. It is a cause of suicide² and of race suicide. Under influence of drink a great number of persons kill themselves each year. The indirect race suicide is much the greater. Beyond question, race suicide consists chiefly in a death-rate needlessly high rather than in a low birth-rate, whatever the cause may be; for the high death-rate is due mainly to bad social conditions which society may remedy if it will. The worst of these bad conditions is alcohol and the liquor traffic whose death toll is frightfully large. Even the number of officially reported deaths due to alcohol is startling. In the registration area, covering 51.8 per cent of the population of the United States, during the five years 1904-8, 13,218 deaths are charged to alcoholism and 29,406 to liver cirrhosis. Since 75 per cent of the cases of liver cirrhosis are caused by drink, it follows that in the whole population of the country during those five years, if the same specific death-rates obtained, 68,093 persons were slain by alcoholism acting directly or indirectly through its favorite disease.³ In addition, the killing power of alcohol in connection with other special diseases must be considered. It is estimated that the percentages of deaths wholly or in part due to drink are 10 to 12 for tuberculosis; 22 for pneumonia, paralysis, and apoplexy; 30 for Bright's disease; 16 for heart disease; and 43 for heat prostration; while there are in all 106 diseases in which alcohol may be one cause of death.⁴

Drunkenness must be charged with much of the legalized or socially sanctioned slaughter which we call war. Lombroso shows

¹ The exploitation of the report of the London laboratory by A. J. Nock, "A New Science and Its Findings," *American Magazine*, LXXXIII, 577-83, should be read with the luminous criticism of C. R. Davies, "Alcohol and Parentage," *Survey*, XXX (1913), 737-38.

² F. Printzing, *Trunksucht und Selbstmord* (Leipzig, 1895); Horsley and Sturge, *Alcohol and the Human Body*, pp. 90-92.

³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Mortality Statistics*, 1908, pp. 114-15.

⁴ Scientific Temperance Federation, *The Effect of Alcoholic Drinks*, pp. 20-21, citing Phelps, *The Mortality of Alcohol* (1911); cf. Horsley and Sturge, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-31, 269-77; W. H. Welch, in *Physiological Aspects of the Liquor Problem*, II (1913), 351-74, for the Committee of Fifty.

that "alcohol is a powerful factor in insurrections. This fact has not escaped the attention of leaders of rebellions, who have often taken advantage of it to attain their ends." The homicidal crowds of the French Revolution were inflamed by drink.¹ Everywhere in the annals of warfare one finds evidence of the bloody deeds resulting from alcoholic madness. Considering the number of statesmen, diplomats, and especially military leaders who in all times and places are reported to have been hard drinkers, may we justly assume that many needless wars and many massacres in wars have been caused by the inflamed passions or the warped judgment due to alcohol?

The close relation of the liquor traffic to social disease and to social vice is notorious. The saloon is the sister of the brothel. Of this the Chicago vice report affords convincing proof. The commission found that next to the house of prostitution itself the liquor interest is the most important element connected with the social evil. No other influence in the city contributes so much to immorality and prostitution. "The Brewery Companies, the Liquor Dealers' Protective Association of Illinois, and the Wholesale Liquor Dealers' Association have all gone on record as in favor of the elimination of the sale of liquor in connection with prostitution." Yet, by actual count during the term of investigation, 928 prostitutes were "permitted and encouraged in no less than 236 saloons," many of which are "under the control of the brewery companies." In other words, over 50 per cent of the 445 saloons examined are "frequented by immoral women who openly solicit for drinks and for immoral purposes and receive the protection of the saloon keepers and interests"; while in the city there were 6,707 saloons not investigated by the commission.²

Without doubt the saloon is the chief laboratory of the vice and crime attributable to the use of intoxicating drinks. The closing of the saloon is the indispensable condition of any successful effort to eliminate the evils caused by alcohol. Wherever the saloon has been closed, whether by local option or by state-wide prohibition,

¹ Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, pp. 100-101.

² *The Social Evil in Chicago* (1911), pp. 119 ff. "Alcoholism is a breeder of prostitution and sexual crimes," Bongers, *op. cit.*, pp. 352, 619-20.

drunkenness and therefore vice and crime have been lessened. Everywhere "dry" towns compare favorably with license towns in this regard.¹ Why stop with local or state action? Why not demand nation-wide prohibition? Are not the American people ready to empower and to require the federal government to outlaw a traffic so destructive of the moral and vital resources of the nation? No alleged service of the saloon as the "poor man's club," no failure of society to provide healthful recreation for the masses, should blind us to the fact that the evil caused by the American saloon, in its sinister alliance with corrupt politics, vice, and crime, outweighs many times all the assumed benefits which it may have as a "social center." There can be no safe compromise if we would conserve the spiritual and the vital resources of the nation. The saloon must go. The proposed constitutional amendment should be ratified by the states, and that speedily. Moreover, is not the vast waste of food materials in the production of alcoholic drinks in reality a social crime? In the present world-crisis the evil seems intolerable. As "first aid" in the emergency, shall not the whole liquor traffic be absolutely "interned" during the war?

¹ Henderson, *Preventive Agencies and Methods*, pp. 219-32; Cherrington, *Anti-Saloon League Year Book* (1913); *Massachusetts Report* cited above. The *Report of the Massachusetts Prison Commission* (1911) shows that 63 per cent of all arrests are for drunkenness.